



**A Message
From
The
Secretary**

Work has begun to implement an agency initiative geared at enhancing a culture of safety throughout the organization. The goal of the initiative will be to establish a system that each employee can embrace to help create a total commitment to safety, regardless of position.

Currently, safety programs within the two operational divisions and the laboratory work mostly independent of each other. The Culture of Safety Initiative will create a centralized safety program that will be intertwined throughout the organization and with all employees, not just within the purview of a particular safety program.

For this reason, it will be focused on producing desired behaviors, not just creating written guidelines. To achieve a true culture of safety, the initiative will incorporate a focus on people, processes, communications, safety competence and responsibility.

There is currently an effort underway to determine the staff infrastructure and auditing processes needed to establish a comprehensive agency safety program. Other tasks will include documenting staff responsibilities, creating reporting procedures, developing project goals, expanding safety training and creating efficient documentation procedures. It is also still being determined as to how existing safety committees will interface within the developing safety infrastructure.

Implementation of a project of this size will take time and energy. I encourage supervisors to recognize the importance of safety and allow staff members to serve on safety committees and tasks forces that are appropriate for their positions. While employee safety is obviously one of my primary goals, safety is everyone's responsibility.

You will continue to hear more about this initiative in the coming months. Some of you will even be asked to serve in safety roles. Please contact Julia Young, Safety Compliance Officer, at 296-1526 or jyoung@kdhe.state.ks.us if you have further questions.

Be well,